

Vermont Folklife Center

2015-2016 TRADITIONAL ARTS APPRENTICESHIP INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

What is a traditional arts apprenticeship? An apprenticeship is a face-to-face learning situation in which an experienced artist instructs a novice. This instruction addresses both the skills and techniques of an art form, as well as its meaning and use within the communities in which it is practiced.

What kinds of arts can be learned in an apprenticeship? The traditional arts are expressions of shared identity within a family, community, regional, tribal, ethnic, occupational or religious group. These arts reflect the values and aesthetics of the group that practices them. They are passed from generation to generation in an informal face-to-face setting rather than through formal classes. The traditional arts include performing arts such as music and dance, craft arts such as basket making or quilting, occupational trades such as boat-building and blacksmithing, and ceremonial arts related to religion, the seasons, or life cycles.

What kinds of arts do not qualify for the program? Art forms that are not part of a community or family heritage cannot be funded. The program does not support the work of professional teachers, contemporary studio craftspeople, or those who make reproductions of antiques. It does not fund modern interpretations of traditional arts.

Who is a master traditional artist? Master artists are longtime practitioners who have reached a high level of expertise in their art form and are recognized within their community as being among the very best artists in their field. Since several of Vermont's ethnic and regional cultural groups extend into neighboring states and Canada, applications will be accepted from master artists living outside Vermont.

Who can be an apprentice? Apprentices must be residents of the state of Vermont. Apprentices should already have some skill in the art form they wish to study and demonstrate a serious commitment to the mastery of the art form. In cases where apprentices wish to recover traditions that have been lost within their local community, exception may be made to the required previous experience. Preference is given to apprentices who plan to study art forms that are part of their own cultural tradition. Apprentices may be of any age.

How long does an apprenticeship last? Apprenticeships usually span from 3 to 12 months but alternative intensive schedules will be considered if appropriate. The master and apprentice should apply as partners and together develop a teaching plan that specifies where, when, and how often they will meet and how long each session will last.

How much money is involved? Support for apprenticeships range from \$500 to \$2,000. Support is limited to a stipend for the master artist and materials and travel expenses for the master artist and/or apprentice.

TO THE MASTER AND APPRENTICE:

1. Before you complete this application it is important for the two of you, master and apprentice, to meet together and talk through your ideas for the apprenticeship. Without a clear, shared understanding of what is to take place and why, many problems can result, both in the application and the apprenticeship itself. If you have questions or need help with the form, call program coordinator Greg Sharrow at the Vermont Folklife Center (802) 388-4964 or gsharrow@vermontfolklifecenter.org. **We strongly suggest you contact Greg before applying in order to be sure that your art form is eligible.**

2. With the exception of music or dance ensembles, apprenticeships are for individual study, not for group or class instruction. A master artist may have more than one apprentice but each apprentice should apply separately.

3. As you plan the budget for your application, remember that most of the funds should go to the master artist as a stipend for his or her teaching--it's up to the two of you to negotiate what this amount should be. If either the master or apprentice needs to purchase supplies or materials for the apprenticeship, please list these on the application and include their total cost. Travel costs should be figured at 55.5 cents a mile. Estimate your materials and travel costs as closely as you can. If your needs for funds are different from those mentioned here, please contact Greg.

4. You must each submit documentation that gives evidence of your skills and abilities with this art form. Include up to five slides or photographs or a five-minute audio or video tape--whichever is most appropriate to the art form you'll be studying and teaching. Be sure to label everything you submit. Contact Greg if you need assistance documenting your work.

5. Applications will be reviewed by a panel including folklorists, cultural specialists, traditional artists, and community scholars. Applications will be evaluated according to:

- Traditionality of the art form.
- Master artist's first-hand knowledge of cultural context of the art form.
- Significance of the art form to the community that practices it.
- Quality of work of both the master and apprentice.
- Apprentice's commitment to the art form.
- Feasibility of the timetable and teaching plan.

6. THE POSTMARK DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS JULY 15, 2015. Apprenticeships may begin as of **September 1, 2015** and must be completed by **August 31, 2016**.

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**Vermont Folklife Center
Traditional Arts Apprenticeship Program**

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